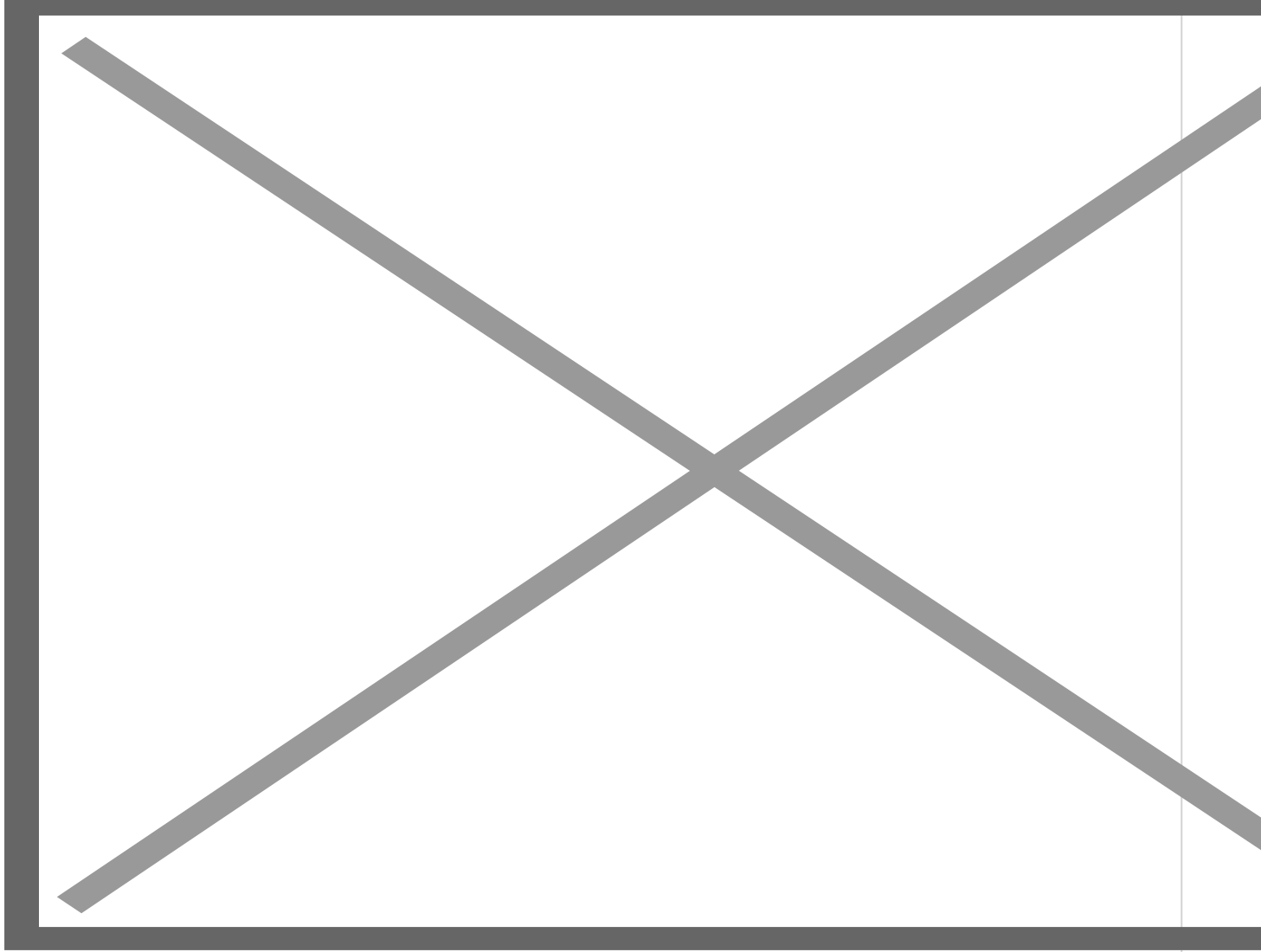


# *The Soul of the Nation*

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**Illustrative image taken from Misiones Minrex**

By María Josefina Arce

October 20 is a date that summons all Cubans. It marks the birth of a different, rebellious nation, determined to conquer its true independence and defend it at any cost.

On that day in 1868, the National Anthem was sung for the first time in the heroic city of Bayamo, in the east of the country, liberated by the Mambi forces from the Spanish colonialist troops. A call to combat

and a song of love for the homeland that was transmitted from Cuban to Cuban, feeding the libertarian flame.

The Hymn to whose chords, as the National Hero of Cuba, José Martí, said, the decorum dormant in the chest of men was raised and that has always been a source of inspiration and has been present in all the battles fought by the country.

And in commemoration of one of the most relevant events in our history, October 20 is celebrated as Cuban Culture Day, a reflection of the soul of the nation, of its identity.

Our culture is synonymous with resistance and dignity, because as stated by the historic leader of the Cuban Revolution, Fidel Castro (1926-2016), culture is the shield and sword of the nation.

It is born of the people and is an expression of what is happening in the country, of its battle to keep our roots alive, and to make known to the world the best and most genuine of Cubans.

It is also a creator of values and ethics. It goes beyond artistic creation, it is linked to everything that has to do with the spirituality of the human being, the center of the Cuban revolution, which throughout these decades has made clear its commitment to the advancement of culture and has made it possible for it to belong to everyone and not a matter of elite.

The revolutionary process brought culture within the reach of every Cuban. The first was a literacy campaign, and over time new schools, museums and many other centers for the dissemination of culture were created.

The Revolution has always kept in mind that "Without culture there is no possible freedom...", a maxim of Fidel Castro's thinking, at the forefront of forming a cultured people, a free people.

October 20 is a day of celebration, but also of reflection and commitment, because culture is the bastion of our values, principles and the identity of our homeland.

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